

Chock Full o' Nuts

425 LEXINGTON AVENUE
New York 17, N. Y.

May 13, 1958

THE WHITE HOUSE
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RECEIVED

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C.

My dear Mr. President:

I was sitting in the audience at the Summit Meeting of Negro Leaders yesterday when you said we must have patience. On hearing you say this, I felt like standing up and saying, "Oh no! Not again."

I respectfully remind you sir, that we have been the most patient of all people. When you said we must have self-respect, I wondered how we could have self-respect and remain patient considering the treatment accorded us through the years.

17 million Negroes cannot do as you suggest and wait for the hearts of men to change. We want to enjoy now the rights that we feel we are entitled to as Americans. This we cannot do unless we pursue aggressively goals which all other Americans achieved over 150 years ago.

As the chief executive of our nation, I respectfully suggest that you unwittingly crush the spirit of freedom in Negroes by constantly urging forbearance and give hope to those pro-segregation leaders like Governor Faubus who would take from us even those freedoms we now enjoy. Your own experience with Governor Faubus is proof enough that forbearance and not eventual integration is the goal the pro-segregation leaders seek.

In my view, an unequivocal statement backed up by action such as you demonstrated you could take last fall in deal-

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ing with Governor Faubus if it became necessary, would let it be known that America is determined to provide -- in the near future -- for Negroes -- the freedoms we are entitled to under the constitution.

Respectfully yours,

Jackie Robinson
Jackie Robinson

JR:cc

O.F.

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Dear Mr. Robinson:

Thank you very much for taking the time to write me some of the thoughts you had after the meeting of the Negro leaders here in Washington. While I understand the points you make about the use of patience and forbearance, I have never urged them as substitutes for constructive action or progress. #

If you will review my talk made at the meeting, you will see that at no point did I advocate a cessation of effort on the part of individuals, organizations, or government, to bring to fruition for all Americans, the enjoyment of all the privileges of citizenship spelled out in our Constitution.

I am firmly on record as believing that every citizen -- of every race and creed -- deserves to enjoy equal civil rights and liberties, for there can be no such citizen in a democracy as a half-free citizen. XF102-B-3

I should say here that we have much reason to be proud of the progress our people are making in mutual understanding -- the chief buttress of human and civil rights. Steadily we are moving closer to the goal of fair and equal treatment of citizens without regard to race or color.

This progress, I am confident, will continue. And it is gifted persons such as yourself, born out of the crucible of struggle for personal dignity and achievement, who will help lead the way towards the goals we seek.

Sincerely,

DWIGHT D. EISENHOWER

Mr. Jackie Robinson X
425 Lexington Avenue
New York 17, New York

CROSS CARD FOR STAFF SECRETARY